



JBVA TODAY!



A Weekly Newsletter from the Jesse Brown VAMC, Chicago, IL

April 4, 2005



The Director's Corner

by Stan Johnson
Acting Medical Center Director

Welcome to the first edition of *JBVA Today!* Our new employee newsletter will be issued every Monday to keep everyone informed of the activities taking place within our medical center, to recognize and celebrate the many achievements of our staff members and to enhance communication throughout our facilities.

Our goal is to develop a newsletter that truly meets the information needs of our employees. To accomplish this, we encourage each of our services to submit items of interest to the editor. You will find an informational box on the last page of each edition that explains how to make editorial submissions.

We have a lot to take pride in at the Jesse Brown VAMC – a staff of tremendously skilled and dedicated employees, a vast array of programs and activities and the inner satisfaction that comes from providing superb patient care to our veterans. It is the goal of *JBVA Today* to recognize and honor our successes while providing information to our staff that will assist them to perform their jobs and enhance teamwork within the medical center.

This week's issue includes

Opening of new Patient Health Education Center (page 2)
Spotlight on Federal Employee of the Year Nominees (pages 3, 4)
National Nutrition Month Activities (page 5)
Top Awards for Acting Director, Gerontological Nurse Practitioner (page 7)
Staff Invited to MOVE it... to help lose it! (page 8)

**GRAND
OPENING !!!**

Patient Health Education Resource Center



**When: Tuesday, April 5, 2005
9am to 3pm**

**Where: Rm. 3225
3rd floor Taylor Bldg.**

**ALL ARE INVITED !!!
REFRESHMENTS SERVED
1pm - 3pm**

The Patient Health Education Resource Center (PHERC) will provide veterans and their families with easy access to health information so they are able to take a more active role in their health care decisions.

PHERC staff is available to assist patients with a full range of basic and detailed information about their diagnosis, scheduled procedures, medications and prevention of future health problems. The center will also be open to use by employees and volunteers.

The resource center offers a variety of reference books, including *Mayo Clinic Family Health*, *Home Remedies for Seniors* and *Consumer Reports Medication Book*. It also offers general books, magazines, pamphlets and audiovisuals (in both VHS and DVD formats) on many different health topics, as well as health education classes on smoking cessation, diabetes and medications.

PHERC staff can also assist veterans to access the HEALTH@VET website, which provides patients with a wealth of health information and the ability to print out their own personal medical records and make physician appointments.

And the Nominees Are...

A total of 17 individual staff members and two medical center teams totaling 13 employees were nominated for Federal Employee of the Year honors and will attend the Federal Executive Board Awards Luncheon on May 4 at Soldier Field. Over the next several issues, *JBVA Today* will spotlight the nominees.



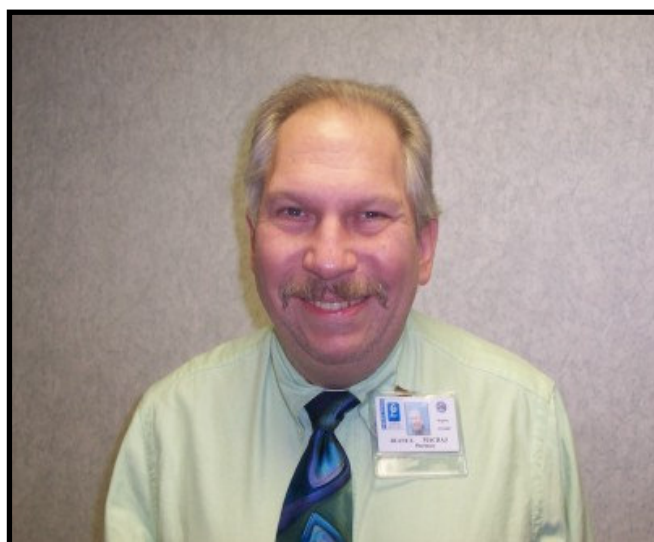
Sandra Thomas

Medical Service

Nominee: Outstanding Technical or
Program Support Employee

Sandra Thomas performs job functions in three Cardiology areas; the treadmill, stress lab and EKG station. She volunteered to be trained in treadmill and stress test functions, with no additional compensation, serving as a “floater” for wherever she is needed to provide a high quality of back-up service and help maintain appropriate staff coverage. She can identify abnormal ECG tracings and calls the appropriate physicians if she notices changes that are problematic. Her pleasant, helpful and “can do” attitude are very appreciated by the physicians, residents and staff in Cardiology and she always goes out of her way to meet the needs of her patients.

Duane Machaj serves as the Pharmacy computer application specialist, assisting with the implementation of new software and hardware programs while training staff, residents and students on their use. He also serves as chairperson of the medical center’s ADPAC Council and as co-chair for the Car Code Medication Administration committee – assisting with trouble shooting and resolving problems to ensure optimal patient safety. Last year he helped implement “Scrip Talk” software (audible prescription labels) to assist blind veterans, dramatically increased the number of mailed prescriptions to reduce pharmacy costs and verified approximately 2,500 drug entries while implementing Drug Accountability software.



Duane Machaj, R.Ph.

Pharmacy Service

Nominee: Outstanding Professional Employee



Carolyn Hill
 Patient Administration Service
 Nominee: Outstanding
 Secretarial/Clerical Employee

As Ward Clerk on 6-West, a very busy surgical unit with an outpatient antibiotic clinic, Carolyn Hill is the “glue” of the team that keeps the unit running smoothly. She continually receives compliments from veterans and family members for the assistance she provides – helping them contact caregivers, establishing room assignments prior to the patient’s arrival, speeding up discharge orders, delivering personal care items requested by patients and even helping them to program their TV remote controls. She also brings a tremendous team-based approach to her work by performing duties not expected of her and sharing her team spirit and knowledge of VA with other staff.

Claude Massey has proven himself to be a very valuable member of the evening shift housekeeping team – directing the team’s project assignments and often accomplishing them ahead of schedule. He frequently demonstrates his initiative by suggesting customer needed priorities and simplifying various work processes, such as implementing the use of multifunctional equipment to eliminate the need for other equipment and increase his team’s productivity. He readily volunteers for additional assignments and strives to motivate his other team members to work together and maintain a positive atmosphere.



Claude Massey
 Environmental Management Service
 Nominee: Outstanding Trades & Crafts
 Employee

N&FS Staff Conclude National Nutrition Month Activities



Nutrition & Food Staff (from left) **Annette Keys, RD**; **Essie Brown, RD**; **Dolly Boy, RD**; and **Anne Myslinsky, RD** sold popcorn to sponsor National Nutrition Month activities and to tout that snack food's nutritional value.

Nutrition and Food Service held a Nutrition Fair to conclude a month-long schedule of activities for National Nutrition Month. Among the N&FS staff providing a nutritional analysis of various foods were (from right) **Dolly Boy, RD**; **Shari Pollack, RD**; **Valerie Carr, DTR** and **Doris Marshall, DTR**.



Eric Vandenburg, Ph.D., Mental Health Service Line, is weighed out by **Bonita Smith, DTR**, during the Nutrition Fair. A total of 117 staff took the "Hours-for-Pounds" Employee Weight Loss Challenge. Participating employees were weighed at the beginning and end of March. The five staff members that lost the highest percentage of their weight will each be awarded five hours of time-off award. And each will receive an additional five hours of leave if they keep the weight off another 30 days. The top five winners (losers?) will be featured in the next issue of *JBVA Today*!

Also next week: Winners of the N&FS "Bake-off."

Compliments & Kudos

To the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center;

I wanted to take a moment to thank you for all your help in making the 12th Ward 2nd Annual Senior and Community Fair a huge success. This week's event had over 1,000 attendees. By hosting events such as the Community Fair, we are able to provide residents with access to a variety of services and information that, without your participation, the event would not have been the success that it was.

Sincerely,

George Cardenas
Alderman 12th Ward

DID YOU KNOW??

Jesse Brown VAMC employees not only met last year's Combined Federal Campaign goal, they shattered it. Over \$70,000 was contributed by staff, exceeding the \$54,164 CFC goal by almost 30 percent. Congratulations to Agency Campaign Coordinators **Myra Celestin**, Nursing Service; **Teesha Easley**, Director's Office; **Angielene Owens**, Surgical Service; **Johnnie Minefee**, Nutrition & Food Service; **Tom Sifner**, Director's Office and **David Simon**, Engineering Service., as well as Loaned Executive **Ann Pressley**, Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Service.

Supporting Our Military Troops

Employees, volunteers and veterans at the Jesse Brown VAMC have donated hundreds of pounds of snacks, reading materials and personal care items to our military troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. The letter at right was written back to the medical center by a grateful soldier.

We are thankful to all for showing your support. Every little bit helps and I must say the soldiers are taking on a lot of reading to pass the time. We have important missions and we will forever appreciate the littlest things when we return home! Again, thank you all. God bless you and your families, and God Bless America!!!

- 1st Sergeant E. Lalshe

Honors & Awards



The American Hospital Association selected JBVAMC Acting Director **Stan Johnson** as the 2005 recipient of its Federal Health Care Executive Award for Excellence. This prestigious award was presented to him during the American College of Healthcare Executives annual meeting held in Chicago last month. In the photo at left, Mr. Johnson is joined by Laura Miller, VA Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management. Ms. Miller took advantage of her trip to Chicago to visit the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center, where she met with top management and toured our facilities.

Carol J. Einhorn, RN, Gerontological Nurse Practitioner, was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Chicago Metropolitan Chapter of the Society of Urological Nurses and Assistants (SUNA). This is only the second the Chapter has bestowed a Lifetime Award, which is given to a member who fosters the goals and objectives of the organization, has served as a mentor and has made significant contributions over time to the field of nursing and, particularly, urological nursing. Ms. Einhorn, who came to the Jesse Brown VAMC in 1994, has been a member of the national SUNA since 1975 and has held various offices, including President from 1984 to 1985.



Lifetime Achievement Award

presented to

Carol Einhorn, CURN, NP

Chicago Metro Society of Urological Nurses and Assistants

“Honoring the nursing career of an outstanding nursing leader for her character, accomplishments and contributions. An exemplary model for all nursing professionals to follow.”

MOVEmployee Program to Boost Staff Fitness

The Employer of Choice Committee is starting a new program to help give staff and patients an early morning or mid-day boost and help promote fitness.

The Jesse Brown VAMC and the Lakeside CBOC invites everyone to join its MOVE (Managing Overweight Veterans/Employees Everywhere) program. Consider adding a little extra physical activity into your schedule. MOVE is scheduling 20-minute walks each Tuesday and Thursday at 7:30 and 11:30 a.m., beginning at the medical center's 820 S. Damen entrance. The Lakeside Clinic will hold a similar walk each Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. Participants should meet at 11:15 in Lakeside Room 434. Wear your walking shoes.

Did you know that adding an extra 2000 steps a day can help you burn more calories? Physical activity makes your heart stronger, lowers blood pressure, improves cholesterol and increases your energy level. Walking and talking with friends will make you feel better too! Join us this Tuesday, April 5, for our first walk.

Ticket Deadline for Volunteer Luncheon This Week

Staff that wish to honor their volunteers by attending the annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony and Luncheon on April 19 must purchase tickets by Wednesday, April 6 by calling extension 56109 or stopping by one of the Voluntary Service offices, located in JB Room 1381 or Lakeside Room 411. Tickets cost \$20 for staff.

The ceremony will be held in the Chicago Room (second floor) of the Illini Union, 828 S. Wolcott on Tuesday, April 19. A reception begins at 11 a.m. and lunch will be served at 12 noon. Luncheon entrees include a selection of London Broil Steak, Chicken Valaostano or Gemelli Pasta.

Mark Your Calendar

April 5 – VAVS Quarterly Meeting: 10 a.m. JBVAMC Auditorium

April 20 – Mandatory Review Fair: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Lakeside Auditorium

April 26 to 28 – Mandatory Review Fair: 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. JBVAMC Auditorium

May 3 – Blood Drive: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. JBVAMC Auditorium

JBVAMC Today is published weekly for the employees, patients, volunteers and friends of the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center. Articles of interest are welcome and should be submitted to the JBVAMC Office of Public Affairs (Mail Point 00PR) or by e-mail to Raymond.leber@med.va.gov or by calling (312) 569-6402 or extension 56402.

The editor reserves the right to use and edit contributed articles. Submission deadline is the Wednesday prior to the week of publication.

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